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McArdle, L.D.

The Highway Patrol and  
traffic conditions

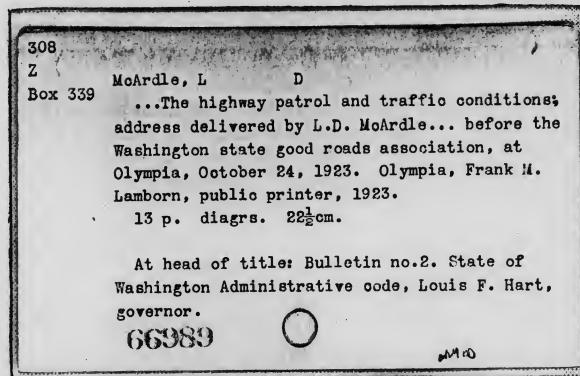
[Olympia, Wash.]

1923

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BULLETIN No. 2

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STATE OF WASHINGTON  
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

LOUIS F. HART, Governor

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The Highway Patrol and  
Traffic Conditions

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY

L. D. McARDLE

Director of Highway Patrol and Organizer of the  
Washington Highway Safety Club

BEFORE THE

Washington State Good Roads  
Association

AT

Olympia, October 24, 1923

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Box 339

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OLYMPIA

FRANK M. LAMBORN, PUBLIC PRINTER  
1923

BULLETIN No. 2

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Dec 1/31/22  
*Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Washington State Good Roads Association:*

I am pleased at the opportunity to appear before you today on a question in which you should be vitally interested, that is, the protection and use of the State's highways. It has been my good fortune to have had some hand in shaping the road policy in this State. At several of your annual meetings some years since I was a member of your Resolutions Committee, and as Chairman of the Road Committee in the House, succeeded in putting upon the statute books most of the substantial recommendations of your body during that period. Doubtless, because of my interest in the road problem, I was given the assignment by the legislature of protecting the highways against destruction, and life and property upon them. For nearly two years this work has engaged my serious attention, and I am going to attempt to present to you briefly and in a manner that I hope will be conclusive, the fact that the Division of Safety in the Department of Efficiency has obtained material results, and also why those results have been but a very small percentage of what is necessary and desirable along that line, and to bespeak your active support in obtaining such aid as will first simplify the problem, and second, make possible something like satisfactory conditions upon our highways.

The public owes a duty to the State for an intelligent use of the highways. When disregard for law becomes popular, civil government is in danger, and in some respects the danger is very apparent in our State. Many instances might be cited to show that the enforcement of traffic laws does not receive the popular support that makes for safety on the highways or morality in civil life.

Some who take a hand in enactment of the traffic laws actually endeavor to protect violators against proper punishment. Some who are sworn to enforce the laws, are found to be either violators of those very laws or wink at violations. Some who should impose proper punishment view the matter either from a revenue standpoint or impose merely to suspend the only penalty the violators fear. Men high in official or public life, whose integrity is unquestioned, who are otherwise exemplary and law-abiding citizens, pay a nominal fine for speeding, and condone their bad example with the excuse, "I was in a hurry" or "I had a pressing business engagement."

#### WORK OF THE PATROL

For one year, September 1, 1922 to August 31, 1923 inclusive, the Highway Patrol caused 2,342 arrests for violations of traffic laws. This sounds quite large, and represents an immense amount of endeavor, considering the force involved and the time consumed in courts. It is actually a very small per cent of the total of traffic violations. I be-

live there are easily tens of thousands of cases in this state today with defective or non-legal lights that are nightly causing bad preventable accidents, while defective brakes are everywhere.

Of the above number 2,068, or 88% were fined, which shows that the cases were practically unquestioned in the minds of the court. During this time the courts have cancelled 1,073 white licenses, 32 blue licenses, and forfeited for driving drunk or recklessly, 187 licenses. Of the 187 whose licenses were revoked for drunken or reckless driving, 47 received jail sentences with fines, 11 received jail sentences without fines. The attitude of the courts with reference to traffic violations, is a most important one. Magistrates have been inclined in many instances to administer lectures or warnings, and in some places make the subject a pure revenue matter. Popular demand upon this department is for strict enforcement of the law, and it is very discouraging not to receive the utmost support from other law-enforcing branches. Jail sentences actually served are the sentences dreaded by law violators, and the withholding of commitments, or suspension of sentences is only too much in practice.

During the year quoted above the fines imposed amounted to \$32,367.07. Stolen cars recovered by this Department amounted to 37, with a minimum valuation of \$24,410.00. Our patrolmen have covered 393,323 miles of highway. We sent out 950 railroad crossing warnings. We also visited many times nearly every county in the State, working toward and obtaining active cooperative endeavor with sheriffs and other peace officers. No stone has been left unturned to obtain the maximum results with the least cost to the public, and we have gone away beyond the lines of endeavor usually followed by public officials trying to obtain official and popular support in the reporting and prosecution of traffic offenders.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR DRIVING

In past time it was generally conceded that all State roads were for the unrestricted use of everyone, as well as cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, peddlers, roadhogs, and road signs. But to insure maintenance and safety it has been forcibly demonstrated that because a person contributes to road construction and maintenance by the payment of taxes or licenses, he is not by right necessarily entitled to such use. The appalling number of fatalities (being over one every other day in the State of Washington for the past 31 months, 26 in August), and the multiplicity of traffic accidents has forced us to the conclusion that it is absolutely essential that certain classes of drivers shall be either permanently or temporarily deprived of the privileges of the use of the highways.

People who are mentally, physically, morally or criminally defective, or who are strongly sub-normal, those subject to fainting spells, the epileptic, insane or feeble-minded have been the cause of many

preventable accidents. I cannot conceive that anyone will excuse a person who drives while drunk, or who has been rendered mentally unfit by the use of narcotics, or one who is addicted to crime, especially motor vehicle thieves, or those engaged in the importation of moonshine or mentality-destroying drugs. In my judgment the above classes should be barred absolutely from the use of the highways, while those defective physically so as not to have the essential use of all motor-controlling parts, such as hands and feet, or those whose vision or hearing is so impaired that they cannot detect signals by sight or sound, are a menace and their operations should be restricted to non-congested districts. Any man who disregards the safety of himself or others by dodging in and out among cars, by parking on the highways, especially on curves, by brainless driving, meaning the thoughtless who insist on entertaining guests by stories and gossip, thus distracting the mind from the duty of constant observation, or the sooner with his arm around a girl, should be so severely penalized that they may realize that it is only a question of time when they, too, will be deprived of the right to use the highways.

The enactment of legislation requiring qualification for drivers can be worked out in a very simple, and as far as the State is concerned, absolutely inexpensive manner. Motorists might be divided into four classes, for convenience in applying statutory requirements.

First. Those who have driven two years or more and have held an operator's license in this State during that period. Examinations would rank fourth in point of time in this class.

Second. Those who have operated cars and held driver's licenses for a period of one year or more. Examinations third in this class.

Third. Any one who has held a driver's license of this State for any period preceding the enactment of the requirement statute. Examinations second in this class.

Fourth. All others who for the first time are seeking permission to drive a car. Examination to be required in this class before issuance of license.

The examinations that I feel the applicant should be subjected to are roughly classed as follows:

Physical and mental tests as to ability and fitness to operate a car, and an investigation as to the personal habits and court record of the applicant.

New drivers should then be required to take a proper course of instruction before driving upon the public highways.

All evidence as to his ability and fitness to operate upon the highways to be sent to the Director of Licenses before he would be permitted to issue an operator's license. The Director of Licenses also should be endowed with discretionary power to require further evidence and to issue or not to issue a license or to cancel any license already

issued. Any man who can afford to own a car can afford to pay the preliminary expense required to protect the State and its citizenship against an improper use of the highways.

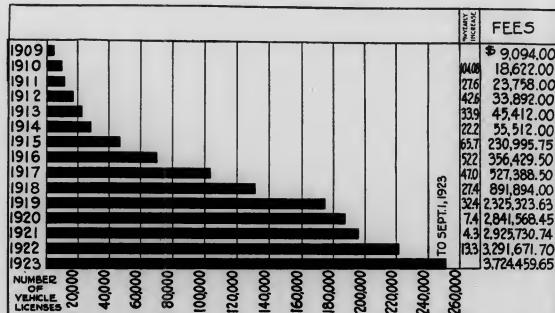
#### THE MOTOR VEHICLE SITUATION

Mr. Percy Chamberlain says that "drivers need horse sense" and asserts "that 'old Dobbin' had horse sense which kept him out of emergencies. If there was an obstacle ahead he stopped of his own accord. On a dark night he proceeded carefully. What a wonderful institution the automobile would be if someone could invent a way to build 'horse sense' into the motor vehicle."

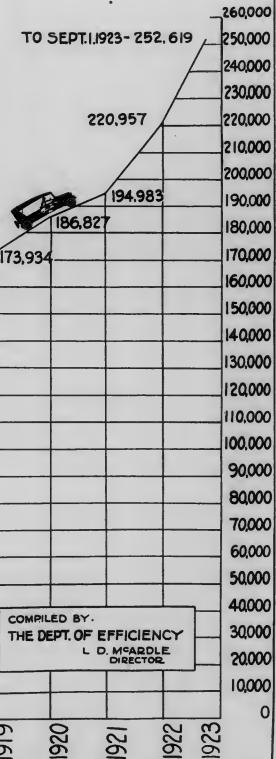
As a boy, living some six miles out of a prominent Southern city, I used almost daily to observe a neighbor going to town with a jag of wood upon his wagon drawn by one ox and one cow, and nightly I observed the driver, with a return jag, lying in the bottom of the empty rack, while the ox and cow took him safely home. This is going horse sense one better, but it exhibits the point Mr. Chamberlain desires to make, that we have not gained in some respects by the substitution of the driver of the modern vehicle over the days when the animal kingdom furnished our motor power. I present herewith a chart showing the reason for our present motor vehicle problem, viz.: the rapid substitution of motor vehicles for animal-propelled vehicles, and the attendant decrease of mentality in drivers, because of the proportionate increase.

Year	Population	No. of Vehicle Licenses	No. of Persons to Vehicle	Percentage of Increase of Drivers
1909	977,811	4,547	215.04	.....
1910	1,141,990	9,311	122.64	104.08
1911	1,053,871	11,879	88.71	27.6
1912	1,080,183	16,946	63.74	42.6
1913	1,094,329	22,706	48.19	33.9
1914	1,131,891	27,756	40.78	72.2
1915	1,158,287	46,000	25.18	65.7
1916	1,162,049	70,032	16.59	52.2
1917	1,183,920	103,601	11.49	47.0
1918	1,232,744	131,309	9.76	27.4
1919	1,330,561	173,934	7.64	32.4
1920	1,356,621	186,827	7.26	7.4
1921	1,434,272	194,983	7.35	4.3
1922	1,450,692	220,957	6.56	13.3
1923	1,469,275	252,619	5.82	14.3

In 1909 there were registered in this State 4,547 motor vehicles. The rapidity of increase since that time will be noted by the diagonal line and also by the increasing length of the heavy black parallel lines. The motor vehicle fees are shown as a matter of interest. The percentage of increase of vehicles tapers off continuously until 1922. The increase in 1910 over 1909 being 104.08 per cent while in 1921 it was but 4.3 per cent, but as the increase was based upon a great



YEAR	POPULATION	NUMBER OF VEHICLE LICENSES	NUMBER OF PERSONS TO VEHICLE
1909	977,811	4,547	215.04
1910	1,141,990	9,311	122.64
1911	1,053,871	16,879	88.71
1912	1,080,183	16,946	63.74
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1914	1,131,891	27,756	40.78
1915	1,158,287	46,000	25.18
1916	1,162,049	70,032	16.59
1917	1,170,000	103,001	11.49
1918	1,282,744	131,309	9.76
1919	1,330,561	173,934	7.64
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L. D. MCARDLE  
DIRECTOR

number of cars the preceding year, the percentage naturally would be small. However, in 1922 the percentage again began to raise at a remarkable rate, being 13.3 per cent for the year, or an increase of 25,962 cars. This year, to September 1st, we already have an increase of 31,662 registrations which indicates for the year approximately 50,000 registrations greater than last year, while the number of people per registered vehicle has continuously decreased from 215.04 per vehicle in 1909 to 5.82 per vehicle on September 1 of this year.

In 1909 ownership was confined almost exclusively to those able to own what was considered a luxury and used for personal pleasure only. Such owners were men of normal minds, law-respecting, conscientious and upright citizens. We had no traffic problems further than the shying of old Dobbin when meeting an unaccustomed road monster. With the increase of cars, and with no qualification restrictions whatever upon operators, we began to include among drivers a constantly increasing number of every character of humanity, in fact, anyone who could own, rent, borrow or steal a motor vehicle. This condition ought to make plain to anyone the fact that drivers should become the primary subject of study on the part of the public and the members of our legislature. In 1921 the legislature had the first vision of this problem, and enacted the present Highway Patrol system, but lacking a comprehensive review of the traffic problem as it existed they so restricted the possible operation, that results to date are neither satisfactory to the public nor to the enforcing officers. The theory of a centralized control of a State-wide problem is unquestionably sound. Such control by the State should meet with actual, whole-hearted, cooperative endeavor by all police agencies dealing with traffic problems.

State control should not mean an independent entity in police work, as the results of the past two years' work has demonstrated that real cooperation can be effected between the State, Counties and Cities.

The most serious problem we have to deal with is human nature. Of those using the highways but too few exercise the same observation and intensive thought that is demanded from a man who drives a locomotive held rigidly upon two rails. The financially irresponsible, the thoughtless, those indifferent to the rights of others, are the causes of many serious accidents. Death rides upon the hood of their machines. How to make the irresponsible, careless and thoughtless responsible for their actions is another serious traffic problem. Perhaps the State may be compelled to require a bond from every driver before this question is solved. This will perhaps have to be extended to the visitor within our borders, as they contribute their part to loss of life, and damage to property. The death rate can be materially reduced by the enactment of a law requiring examination for fitness of drivers.

Our second greatest problem is defective lighting and brakes. This can be almost entirely cured by compulsory inspection and ad-

justment of such equipment. Selfishness is a human quality, but selfishness, curbed, is absolutely essential to bettering hazards upon our highways. The selfish man, thinking only of his own safety, installs powerful lights regardless of law, and relies upon his power, influence and financial condition when arraigned to either let him off entirely or be dismissed with a light fine. If the courts would unanimously apply the law regarding reckless driving to those with glaring headlights, we would be able to reduce the hazard materially.

#### MILEAGE OF STATE ROADS

Counties	Total Miles of Roadway
Adams	2,040.77
Astorin	345.84
Benton	914.00
Chelan	746.10
Clallam	315.00
Clarke	2,687.56
Columbia	550.00
Cowlitz	951.84
Douglas	2,000.00
Ferry	1,057.00
Franklin	1,045.03
Garfield	552.24
Grant	2,383.56
Grays Harbor	618.34
Island	245.00
Jefferson	305.88
King	1,828.27
Kitsap	659.36
Kittitas	640.68
Klickitat	1,616.00
Lewis	1,229.33
Lincoln	3,141.70
Mason	373.00
Okanogan	1,925.71
Pacific	439.64
Pend Oreille	543.53
Pierce	1,211.62
San Juan	200.00
Skagit	753.64
Skamania	204.00
Snohomish	1,546.78
Spokane	1,971.90
Stevens	2,187.50
Thurston	869.32
Wahkiakum	111.75
Walla Walla	1,580.16
Whatcom	865.00
Whitman	2,479.68
Yakima	2,502.77
Total	45,639.70

#### THE HIGHWAY SITUATION

We are dealing with conditions and not with theories. Forty-five thousand miles of road and over 250,000 motor vehicles is a condition, and traffic enforcement should not be so restricted and hampered as to be a theory. The driver's license fee was created to enforce law and not to draw interest to the State Treasury.

The first steps toward the formation of the State Highway system of Washington were taken in 1905, when the State Highway Department was created. At this session of the legislature 12 state roads were established and revenue was provided for the construction of them. In 1907 the "State Aid Law" was enacted, but was repealed in 1911 and was superseded by the present Permanent Highway law. The actual beginning of a well defined program for the construction of a system of highways under the direction of the State Highway Department dates back to 1913, when the state roads were classified into a system of primary and secondary highways and a trunk line system for the state thereby established.

In 1913, there were very few paved roads on the State Highway system, and the mileage of graveled roads was also comparatively small. At the end of the year 1922, the State Highway system was improved by all factors, state and county, to the following extent:

Paved	501 miles
Surfaced with gravel or crushed rock	1,264 miles
Improved earth	250 miles
Total improved	2,015 miles
Unimproved	1,104 miles
Total State Highway System	3,119 miles

The yearly growth of our state highway system is illustrated by chart No. 2. This shows the actual miles of road work performed each year since 1908. But as 208 miles of graded road included in the tabulation was subsequently surfaced the actual state highway system is 2,015 miles instead of 2,223.25 as shown on the chart. Three types of workmanship have been performed during this period, viz.: grading, surfacing and paving. The yearly work performed is as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Graded</i>	<i>Surfaced</i>	<i>Paved</i>	<i>Total</i>
1909	10.60	.....	.....	10.60
1910	21.49	.....	.....	21.49
1911	16.46	.....	.....	16.46
1912	26.60	2.66	.....	23.26
1913	11.70	.50	.....	12.20
1914	218.25	19.40	.....	237.65
1915	104.82	94.73	.....	199.55
1916	185.34	100.30	.....	285.64
1917	44.28	41.49	3.50	89.27
1918	70.28	96.48	.....	166.76
1919	19.09	80.86	5.24	105.19
1920	42.23	113.22	89.20	244.65
1921	55.32	123.50	70.25	279.07
1922	50.77	139.02	89.67	279.46
1923	25.00	171.00	56.00	252.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>926.23</b>	<b>983.16</b>	<b>313.86</b>	<b>2,223.25</b>

It will be seen by this that we have graded 926.23 miles, have surfaced 983.16 miles, paved 313.86, a total of 2,223.25. In addition, counties have paved 187.14, which gives the state a total paved upon our highway system, of 501 miles. In addition to this, counties have paved about 700 miles more so that we have in the state approximately 1,200 miles of paved highway. At first the work by the state consisted entirely of grading. The first surfacing was in 1912 consisting of 2.66 miles. The first paving was in 1917 consisting of 3½ miles. The paving this year, consists of 56 miles, 37 miles of which completes the Pacific Highway and also closes the last gap for 700 miles.

#### **COST TO THE STATE GOVERNMENT**

The source and volume of expenditures by the state for construction purposes only, upon the highway system from April 1, 1905, to March 31, 1923, were as follows:

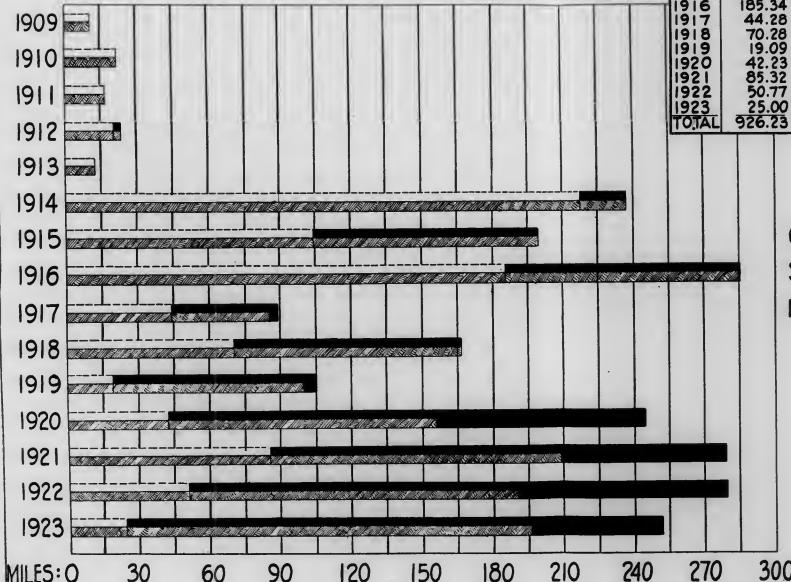
Taxes .....	\$11,581,000
Motor Vehicle Fees .....	8,065,000
Federal Aid .....	5,328,000
Permanent Highway and County Funds approxi- mately .....	4,000,000
 Total to March 31, 1923 .....	\$28,974,000
Taxes approximate .....	1,180,000
Appropriations for constr. 1923-25 M. V. Funds .....	9,583,000
Federal Aid 1923-25 .....	2,066,000
 Total including 1923-25 appropriations .....	\$41,803,000

For our Highway System, as it stands today, the state does not owe one dollar, as we have adhered rigidly to a policy of "Pay as you go." And our future ability to extend our hard surfacing is limited only by the amount of our revenue required for maintenance.

It might be of interest to know the amount the roads of our state have cost since 1910:

SHOWING YEARLY PROGRESS OF WORK  
**MILEAGE OF STATE HIGHWAYS**

COMPILED BY  
 DEPT. OF EFFICIENCY  
 L. O. MCADOLE  
 DIRECTOR



**LEGEND**

GRADED

SURFACED

PAVED

**State Expenditures**

Expended by the State direct.....	\$24,974,000.00
Expended by Counties under State control.....	4,000,000.00
Total by State .....	\$28,974,000.00

**County Expenditures**

Permanent Highway Fund (less \$4,000,000.00).....	\$13,976,996.00
Road and Bridge Funds .....	28,143,970.00
Road District Taxes .....	43,587,732.00
Special Road District Taxes .....	1,022,309.00
County Road Bonds .....	16,869,800.00
Donahue Road Bonds .....	9,081,162.00

Total by Counties .....

Total Expenditures .....

**ROAD AND TRAFFIC PROBLEM**

The construction of highways by the state has not and cannot keep pace with the increased use.

Road construction for the last two years is a fair index of what is possible with our revenues. We cannot expect to provide an increasing percentage of completed mileage and will in fact be fortunate if we do not find a continued moderate decrease.

	1922	1923
Graded .....	50.77	25.00
Surfaced .....	139.02	171.00
Paved .....	89.67	56.00
Total .....	279.46	252.00

In the meantime the increase of motor vehicles for 1923 will probably reach 50,000 over last year, while all indications point to a record breaking number of foreign cars on our highways. This is a universal condition. The U. S. Bureau of Public Roads reports an increase for the first six months of 1923 of 764,000 registrations.

On September 1st, this year, there were registered in this state, 252,619 motor vehicles. Meantime we must be prepared for an enormous congestion. Private and commercial traffic conditions will be responsible for greatly increasing the problems of both lawful and unlawful use of our highways. The completion of the Pacific Highway furnishes a continuous race track three hundred miles long across the state.

Assuming that the Washington cars out of the state equal at all times the foreign cars within the state, we ask you to think what this means as a road and traffic problem. Assuming that we actually had September 1, 1923, 250,000 motor vehicles in the state, and that they were placed end to end, allowing twelve feet for each vehicle, the line would extend 568 miles, or from Tacoma via Auburn, Renton, Snoqualmie Pass, Ellensburg, Vantage Ferry, Quincy, Davenport, Spokane, Colfax, Walla Walla and Pasco to Benton City. Or, if placed side by side crosswise of the Pacific Highway, allowing 6½ feet for each

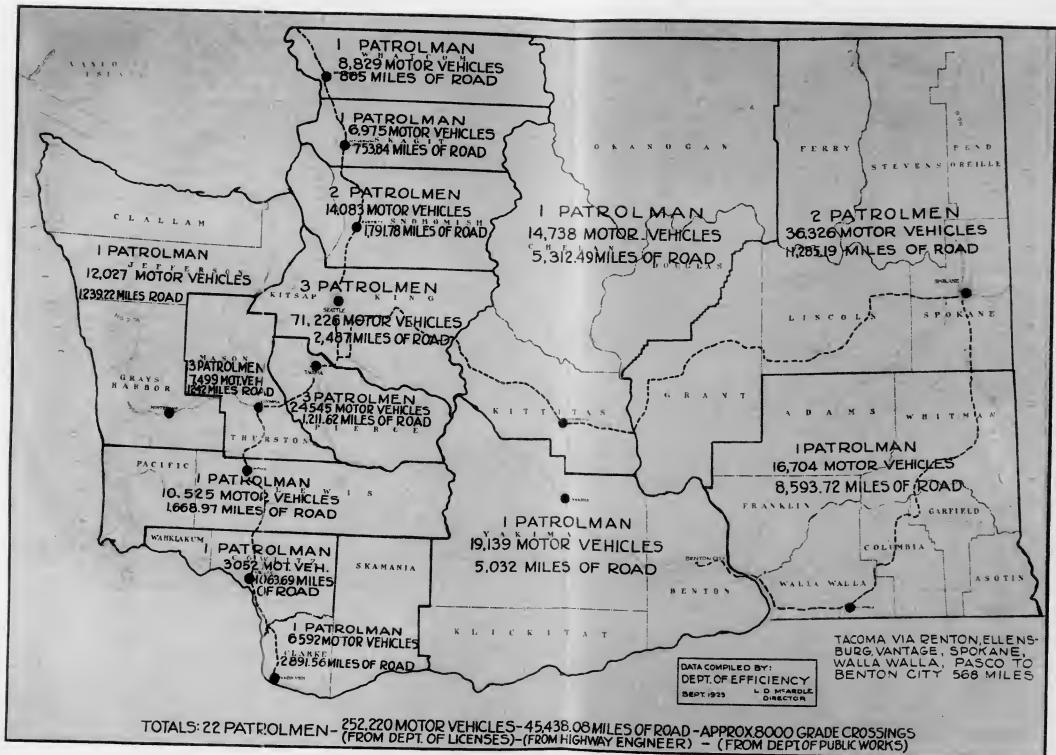
vehicle, they would extend in an unbroken line from the international boundary at Blaine to and through Vancouver, Washington, across the inter-state bridge, a distance of 307.7 miles. On Labor Day between five and six o'clock a check by an officer of this department gave 35 cars a minute passing a given point between Tacoma and Camp Lewis. Study these facts, and apply the limited percentage of increase of highway construction, the rapid percentage of increased number of motor vehicles, and the decreasing number of people to a vehicle, and conviction will quickly follow that law enforcement must be largely aided by law observance by our citizenship if any reasonable results are to be obtained. Do not yourself be a driving fool, but aid law enforcement by acting as the eyes of the law.

#### THE ENFORCEMENT SITUATION

Your attention is directed to a map of the state of Washington or chart number three. Little explanation is necessary to convince any thinking man that 100 per cent or even a 25 per cent enforcement is impossible without more assistance than our present force. We work on a financial budget system, so that no efficient patrolman shall fear being let out before the close of the biennium because of exhausted finance. As the problem is progressive each year, we are retaining this year a reserve of ten per cent of our appropriation for meeting increased needs next year. We do not expect to make any reversion to the fund this biennium as the service demands every cent we have and much more. Experience demonstrated that the state primary highway system was the arteries toward and along which nearly all traffic flows, and that the centers of greatest need were located upon it, so we gradually districted the state, using the points of greatest congestion as our base of operation in each district. We now have fourteen districts, the boundaries of each of which are clearly shown on the chart. Within each district may be seen the number of patrolmen stationed therein, the number of motor vehicles registered to September 1st, and the number of miles of roads upon which violations and accidents can occur. Tabulated, the result follows:

Dist No.	Patrolmen	Motor Vehicle	Miles of Road
1	1	8829	865.00
2	1	6975	753.84
3	2	14083	1,791.78
4	3	71226	2,487.00
5	3	24545	1,211.62
6	3	7499	1,242.00
7	1	12027	1,239.22
8	1	10525	1,668.97
9	1	3052	1,063.69
10	1	6592	2,891.56
11	1	19139	5,032.00
12	1	16704	8,593.72
13	2	36326	11,285.19
14	1	14738	5,312.49

The island counties are not tabulated.



The office is in daily receipt of requests, many times caustic demands for service, that we are utterly unable to give. We endeavor to go as far as we possibly can to cover the state, but patrolmen are human and cannot work all the hours of each day, and even though they did we could not by their work alone obtain but a small percentage of results desired. The law requires all public carriers to come to a full stop at grade crossings, and all others to slow down to twelve miles per hour. Note on the bottom of the chart that there are approximately 8000 such crossings in the state. If a service is required by law, adequate support must be given to make enforcement possible.

#### WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

No one ever saw law enforcement 100 per cent or anywhere near so. There are many reasons, and they are known to all. Yet enforcement officers would like to make as near a 100 per cent record as possible.

A farmer once remarked to his Irish gardener, "This rain will do a lot of good, Pat."

"It will, sorr," said Pat. "Shure an hour of it now will do more good in five minutes than a month of it would do in a week at any other time." Here is the opportunity for those desiring safety to aid us and perform an hour's work every five minutes.

We have shown you the problem from all angles. There remains but one thing to do. Driving at night is an agony, driving at any time is an anxiety. Let those who are law-respecting, work with the law enforcement forces. We believe that satisfactory results can be obtained only through the awakening of the public conscience to a realization that every motorist who desires safety for himself and family must be patriotic enough to act in the capacity of a law-abiding citizen, expecting no other remuneration than the satisfaction of having performed his duty by setting an example to other motorists. If the 90 per cent who desire sane driving will help us we will soon clean up the other ten per cent with our present force. We have organized the Washington State Highway Safety Club. There are no dues, no initiation, no oaths, other than to subscribe to the following:

"I am familiar with the rules of the road and the statutory requirements regarding the use of the Highways, *I agree to respect the law and assist the Department of Efficiency in promoting safety to person and property upon the highways.*"

Will you join us?

MSH 24411

**END OF  
TITLE**